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GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

## United States Senate

May 22, 2017

The Honorable Terry Branstad  
United States Ambassador to the People's Republic of China  
American Embassy  
No. 55 An Jia Lou Road  
Beijing, China 100600

Dear Ambassador Branstad:

Congratulations on your confirmation to be the United States' Ambassador to the People's Republic of China. I know you understand, as a former governor of a rural state, the importance of strengthening our rural communities and expanding economic opportunities for farmers, ranchers and small manufacturers. That is why I supported your nomination to a job that plays a vital role in promoting small businesses. America currently faces many economic challenges and opportunities with China that require immediate attention. In the coming months, I look forward to working with you on important issues such as beef exports that will support good-paying jobs in Montana.

China is our largest trading partner. America, however, continues to maintain a sizable trade deficit with the Chinese. In 2016, we imported \$309 billion more goods and services than we exported. It is critical that we prioritize reducing this trade deficit and focus on creating jobs at home. As Ambassador, I urge you to use your role to expand access to Chinese markets and to promote American goods and companies.

Exporting United States beef to China is a significant opportunity to support American jobs and shrink the current trade deficit. Over the course of the last decade, China substantially increased its beef imports to meet the demand of its rapidly growing middle class. Unfortunately, during this period of growth, China sustained a ban on American beef. After years of calling on China to lift the ban, China recently agreed to resume importing our beef products this summer. We must make sure China follows through on this commitment. Moreover, we must immediately begin to work with potential buyers to ensure China knows that our farmers and ranchers raise the best beef in the world.

Settling the solar goods trade dispute is another issue that would positively affect high-paying manufacturing jobs in my state and beyond. In retaliation to duties that America placed on imported solar panels, China decided to effectively block United States' solar grade polysilicon out of the Chinese market. China is by far the largest purchaser of solar grade polysilicon in the world, which makes this trade dispute very problematic for our polysilicon manufacturers. This trade dispute is bad for our trade deficit and bad for American jobs. I ask that the United States Embassy play an active role in resolving this dispute as soon as possible.

I believe you are well positioned to use your new role to support rural communities. I stand ready to work with you on the issues mentioned above and any issues that will reduce our deficit with China and bring jobs back to rural America.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jon Tester". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Jon Tester